

## REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action of August 25, 2004.

In the Office Action, the drawings were objected to because certain elements mentioned in the specification were not found in the drawings, to wit. rod 44, ends 50, and leg 54. The replacement sheet 4 corrects these errors by inserting and labeling elements 44 and 54, and changing "48" to "50". It is submitted that the revised drawings overcome the objections and acceptance of the drawings is requested.

Claims 6 and 7 were deemed allowable subject to being written independent form with intervening limitations. Claim 2 as currently amended incorporates the subject matter of claims 2 through 6 and is thought to satisfy the conditions for allowance. Claim 7 depends from amended claim 2 and is also thought to be allowable.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC 103 over Stein in view of Valiulis. Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite patentable novelty over these references. Claim 1 recites substantially the subject matter of amended claim 2. It recites a planar rectangular lock bar of heavy sheet metal. The lock bar includes a downwardly and laterally inclined slot with a base and side walls for establishing a latched condition. It is clear that the Stein reference does not teach or suggest such lock bar structure. The device 30 is made of round wire. It does not have a downwardly and laterally inclined slot. The hook 32 is normal to the eyelet 33. These differences provide substantial benefits. The rectangular lock bar is far more sturdy than the secondary reference and enables the hook and lock bar to withstand the illustrated garden equipment, as opposed to the reference that is merely intended for light weight merchandise. Further the inclination of the slot, in addition to the latching function, reduces the lateral

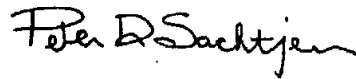
flexing of the support arm needed to achieve an unlatched condition. It is submitted that claim 1 as amended recites patentable novelty.

Claim 8 depends from claim 1 and recites the swaged tabs for retaining the lock bar on the support arm to prevent removal thereof. This feature is not disclosed or suggested in the cited references. It is submitted that claim 8 recites patentable novelty.

For the foregoing reasons, it is believed that claims for the reasons set forth above satisfy the conditions for allowance and notification thereof is respectfully requested.

Dated: November 17, 2004

Respectfully submitted,  
MILLS LAW FIRM, PLLC



Peter D. Sachtjen, Reg. No. 24,619

Mills Law Firm, PLLC  
Post Office Box 1245  
Cary, NC 27512-1245  
(919) 462-3036  
Attorney Direct Line: (252) 413-0475